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STATINTL

the VIEW from LEFT FIELD

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LEMS

Fidel's victory speech

Following are the concluding excerpts from the speech by Prime Minister Fidel Castro delivered in Havana to Cuban athletes returning from successful competition in Cali, Colombia.

Castro, commenting on a dispatch by the president of the U.S. Olympics Committee, continues:

Why all this fuss about our sports, which has developed as one of the objectives of our social effort, a social effort which has cost us a great deal of effort, a great deal of sweat and blood...? All this wasn't attained by simply snapping our fingers. We weren't able to kick the Yankee monopolies out without any effort: it took sweat and blood for our country to really get the reins of its destiny in its own hands — to such an extent that we have become a rival of the United States in any of these fields of human activities.

Among other things, in order to compete, we first had to get the Yankees out of our politics, out of our economy, out of everything. We had to get rid of the monopolies and the imperialists. But not a word is said about that. How come this gentleman doesn't say a word about how our country has had to struggle for these human objectives throughout these years in the midst of sabotage, uninterrupted economic blockage, acts of aggression, infiltration, attempts at subversion, attacks and every other sort of villainy? That is what happened. And what really hurts them the most is the fact that we have attained these human objectives of our Revolution in spite of everything they have done to impede and frustrate our efforts.

This shameless individual keeps mum about this, too. And then he pops up making statements to the effect that we use sports as an instrument.

What he should say is that, despite all of the imperialists' efforts and crimes — crimes perpe-

trated against our country to frustrate its efforts to benefit man — in spite of all that, our country is prospering and scoring this kind of victory.

Before the U.S. used to win more medals than all the countries of Latin America put together. Now, however, after the tremendous sports boom in Cuba, the countries of Latin America have won many more medals than the United States.

We have won victories for our own country and victories for Latin America. The U.S. has a population of 200 million. When we join our medals with those of the other Latin American countries, in spite of the fact that those countries don't have the conditions that Cuba has for the development of sports... We don't have the slightest doubt that, with the passing of time, all the Latin American countries will have the same conditions that Cuba has today for sports. This is inevitable.

The results of all these social efforts are being reflected in a better physical foundation, a better educational foundation, a better cultural foundation for sports. And, moreover, we are gaining experience. It reflects a technique which is much more developed than any we had before and which we have obtained thanks to the cooperation of the other socialist countries. It also reflects — and this is very important — the conduct of our athletes and the spirit of our people, for they reflect the spirit of our people!

This spirit is reflected in a series of activities, such as those of the young people of the Centennial Youth Column in productive work; it is the spirit reflected by our National Heroes of Labor and by the hundreds of cane-cutters who have cut as much as 25,000, 50,000 or 75,000 cwt. of cane; it is the spirit reflected by our fishermen,

in the dignity they maintain when, jailed and taken around in chains, they stand firm and incorruptible; it is the spirit of our young people who are in the vanguard in their studies. This is the result of the new spirit of our people, of our younger generation, the result of this new, very revolutionary spirit, which places a high value on the dignity and spiritual values of man....

The young people who represent Cuba at these events are spiritual heirs of our independence fighters; of the men who attacked the Moncada; of the men of the Granma and the Sierra Maestra; of the men of the Escambray, Giron and all the other struggles of our people. They are their spiritual heirs, and they act accordingly! Our people are proud of our sports delegations not only for their sports victories but also for their brave and firm patriotic conduct....

We'd like to say something else: when we mentioned the hostility of the imperialists and their agents, it's only fair that we also mention — for this is very encouraging to us — the attitude of the people toward our delegations. Even in countries where the imperialists have ruled, for a long time, as is the case with Puerto Rico, our delegation was received with great affection. And we will never forget the tremendous demonstrations of affection with which our delegation was received in the Dominican Republic during the baseball games held there. This is something which is also on the upswing, in spite of all publicity campaigns, lies and intrigues.

Among other intrigues, there is the case of the masseur who died either by accident or through suicide — we really don't know which — for whose death they have tried to blame the Cuban delegation, accusing our delegation of mur-